

Military Families and Military Culture!

Chaplain (Major) Kirk Thorsteinson
HHC, 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade
Alaska Army National Guard
907-321-3026
kirk.v.thorsteinson.mil@mail.mil

Culture Defined

“The set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization.”

Merriam-Webster

Military Culture

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m9MJHTBW1OM>

Oaths

The Oath of Enlistment (for enlisted):

"I, _____, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God."

The Oath of Office (for officers):

"I, _____, having been appointed an officer in the _____ (Military Branch) of the United States, as indicated above in the grade of _____ do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign or domestic, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservations or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office upon which I am about to enter; So help me God."

Military Orientation and Training

Basic Training – often called boot camp – prepares recruits for all elements of service: physical, mental, and emotional. It gives service members the basic tools necessary to perform the roles that will be asked of them for the duration of their tour. Each of the Services has its own training program, tailoring the curriculum to the specialized nature of its role in the Military.

No matter which branch of the Service a recruit chooses, Basic Training is an intense experience. However, 90 percent complete their first six months of service. The purpose of this training isn't to "break" recruits. In fact, the combination of physical training, field exercises and classroom time makes individuals strong and capable. It's a tough process, but a rewarding one that many service members value for life.

Army Basic Training- 10 weeks

Navy Boot Camp- 7-9 weeks

Marine Corps Recruit Training- 12 weeks

Coast Guard Recruit Training- 8 weeks

Air Force Basic Military Training- 8.5 weeks

<http://todaysmilitary.com/training/boot-camp>

Values and Mottos

Army-	Values: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. Motto: "This we'll defend."
Navy-	Values: Honor, Courage, and Commitment Motto: "Not for self, but for country."
Marine Corps-	Values: Honor, Courage, and Commitment. Motto: "Always faithful."
Coast Guard-	Values: Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty. Motto: "Always prepared."
Air Force-	Values: Integrity first, Service Before Self, and Excellence in all we do. Motto: "Aim high...Fly, fight, win."

Military Rank Structure

NAVY

no insignia										
Seaman Recruit (SR)	Seaman Apprentice (SA)	Seaman (SN)	Petty Officer Third Class (PO3)	Petty Officer Second Class (PO2)	Petty Officer First Class (PO1)	Chief Petty Officer (CPO)	Senior Chief Petty Officer (SCPO)	Master Chief Petty Officer (MCP0)	Force or Fleet Command Master Chief Petty Officer (FORMC) (FLTMC)	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON)

COAST GUARD

Seaman Recruit (SR)	Seaman Apprentice (SA)	Seaman (SN)	Petty Officer Third Class (PO3)	Petty Officer Second Class (PO2)	Petty Officer First Class (PO1)	Chief Petty Officer (CPO)	Senior Chief Petty Officer (SCPO)	Master Chief Petty Officer (MCP0)	Command Master Chief (CMC)	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard (MCP0-CG)

ARMY

no insignia										
Private E-1 (PV1)	Private E-2 (PV2)	Private First Class (PFC)	Corporal (CPL)	Specialist (SPC)	Sergeant (SGT)	Staff Sergeant (SSG)	Sergeant First Class (SFC)	Master Sergeant (MSG)	First Sergeant (1SG)	Sergeant Major of the Army (SMA)

MARINES

no insignia											
Private (Pvt)	Private First (PFC)	Lance Corporal (LCpl)	Corporal (Cpl)	Sergeant (Sgt)	Staff Sergeant (SSgt)	Gunnery Sergeant (GySgt)	Master Sergeant (MSG)	First Sergeant (1stSgt)	Master Gunnery Sergeant (MGSgt)	Sergeant Major (SgtMaj)	Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps (SgtMajMC)

AIR FORCE

no insignia													
Airman Basic (AB)	Airman (Amn)	Airman First Class (A1C)	Senior Airman (SrA)	Staff Sergeant (SSgt)	Technical Sergeant (TSgt)	Master Sergeant (MSG)	First Sergeant (E-7)	Senior Master Sergeant (SMSgt)	First Sergeant (E-8)	Chief Master Sergeant (CMSgt)	First Sergeant (E-9)	Command Master Sergeant (CCM)	Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force (CMSAF)

ARMY

Second Lieutenant (2LT)	First Lieutenant (1LT)	Captain (CPT)	Major (MAJ)	Lieutenant Colonel (LTC)	Colonel (COL)	Brigadier General (BG)	Major General (MG)	Lieutenant General (LTG)	General (GEN)	General of the Army (GA)

MARINES

Second Lieutenant (2ndLT)	First Lieutenant (1stLT)	Captain (Capt)	Major (Maj)	Lieutenant Colonel (LtCol)	Colonel (Col)	Brigadier General (BGen)	Major General (MajGen)	Lieutenant General (LtGen)	General (Gen)

AIR FORCE

Second Lieutenant (2d Lt)	First Lieutenant (1st Lt)	Captain (Capt)	Major (Maj)	Lieutenant Colonel (Lt Col)	Colonel (Col)	Brigadier General (Brig Gen)	Major General (Maj Gen)	Lieutenant General (Lt Gen)	General (Gen)

NAVY

Ensign (ENS)	Lieutenant Junior Grade (LTJG)	Lieutenant (LT)	Lieutenant Commander (LCDR)	Commander (CDR)	Captain (CAPT)	Rear Admiral Lower Half (RADM)(L)	Rear Admiral Upper Half (RADM)(U)	Vice Admiral (VADM)	Admiral (ADM)	Fleet Admiral (FADM)

COAST GUARD

Ensign (ENS)	Lieutenant Junior Grade (LTJG)	Lieutenant (LT)	Lieutenant Commander (LCDR)	Commander (CDR)	Captain (CAPT)	Rear Admiral Lower Half (RADM)(L)	Rear Admiral Upper Half (RADM)(U)	Vice Admiral (VADM)	Admiral (ADM)

Common Terms and Lingo

http://www.va.gov/VETSINWORKPLACE/docs/em_termsLingo.asp

- **Official acronyms**
- AWOL– Absent With Out Leave: not at one's place of duty and not authorized to be absent
- CDR – Commander
- CO – Commanding Officer
- CONUS – Continental United States
- COB – Close Of Business: the end of the day or duty shift
- DD or DoD – Department of Defense
- IED – Improvised Explosive Device
- NCO – Non-Commissioned Officer: an enlisted person with command responsibility over soldiers of lesser rank
- NCOIC – Non-Commissioned Officer In Charge
- MOS – Military Occupational Specialty: job or career specialty (e.g., infantryman, intelligence analyst, operating room specialist, military police, etc.)
- OCONUS – Outside the Continental United States
- POC – Point Of Contact: the person to liaise with on a given matter
- SOP – Standard Operating Procedure: the routine manner of handling a set situation
- TDY – Temporary Duty Yonder

Common Terms and Lingo

http://www.va.gov/VETSINWORKPLACE/docs/em_termsLingo.asp

- **Phrases**
- Battle assembly – new term used for Army Reserve weekend drills, unit training assemblies, or multiple unit training assemblies
- Boots on the ground – to physically be in a location (some may use this to say that they want "boots on the ground" for a particular project, which means they want everyone physically in the office, rather than having people call in.)
- Drill – preparation of military personnel for performance of their duties through the practice and rehearsal of prescribed movements; members of the National Guard and Reserve are required to attend one weekend drill a month (sometimes starting Friday night until Monday morning)
- Liberty – authorized free time ashore or off station, not counted as leave, also known as a "pass"
- Ma'am – proper method of addressing female officers in particular and women in general
- Sir – proper method of addressing male officers in particular and men in general
- Tour of duty – time period during which a particular job or assignment is done (e.g., my tour of duty is 8am-5pm)
- **Slang**
- Above my/your pay grade – expression denying responsibility or authority (indicating that the issue should be brought to higher-ranking officials)
- Civvies – civilian clothing
- Down Range – physically in a combat zone
- In-Country – physically in a war zone
- Quarters – (a) military family housing, or (b) doctor's direction to stay home from work (e.g., I'm confined to quarters.)
- Say again (your last) – request to repeat a statement, question, or order, especially over a radio
- Stay in your lane – stay within your boundaries; do your job as commanded and trust that you will know what you need to know when you need to know it
- Wilco – Will comply

Characteristics of the U.S. Military

- 89% are men; 11% are women.
- 66% are white, 16% are black, 10% are Hispanic, 4% are Asian, and 4% are "other."
- The average age of today's Service Members show they are older than in previous wars:
 - Active-duty officers: 34.6 years
 - Active-duty enlisted: 27.1 years
 - Reserve officers: 40.6 years
 - Reserve enlisted: 31.2 years
- 55.2% of active duty Service Members are married, and 49% of reservists are married.
- Close to 40% of all Service Members have children, two on average. The largest percentage (41%) of children for active duty Service Members are 5 years or younger; in the Reserve, the largest percentage of children is 6-14 years.
- 3% of military households are dual-military (both parents are in the military) with children.
- California is the state with the most military personnel, both active duty (12.9%) and reserve (6.9%).
- http://www.va.gov/VETSINWORKPLACE/docs/em_todaysServiceMembers.asp

Personnel End Strength – end, FY2016-17

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/end-strength.htm>

	FY2016					FY2017				
	Active	Guard	Selected Reserve**	Civilian	TOTAL	Active	Guard	Selected Reserve**	Civilian	TOTAL
TOTAL	1,301,300	153,831	464,900	379,600	769,800	1,281,900	440,700	360,500	567,900	2,651,000
DOD	-----	-----	-----	195,400	195,400	-----	-----	-----	193,800	193,800
Army	475,000	342,000	198,000	201,700	1,216,700	460,000	335,000	195,000	196,500	1,186,500
Navy	327,300	-----	57,400	181,500	565,900	322,900	-----	58,000	183,300	564,200
Marines	182,000	-----	38,900	20,100	241,000	182,000	-----	38,500	20,000	245,000
Air Force	317,000	105,500	69,200	171,000	662,700	317,000	105,700	69,000	170,800	662,500

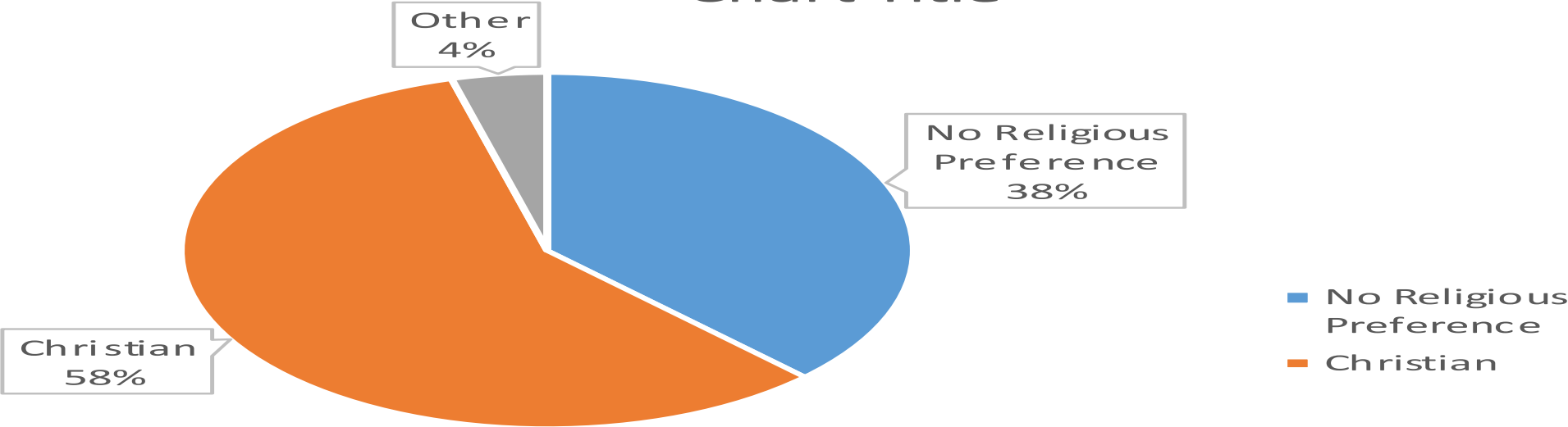
US Army Alaska 2015 Command Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=886QNb3jRr0>

Alaska Army National Guard Soldier Religious Preferences
-- as of 15 DEC 2015 (1824 Soldiers Assigned)

<i>No Religious Preference</i>	<i>Christian</i>	<i>Other</i>	
37.6%	58.2%	4.2%	

Chart Title



Other:	Atheist (19)		
(# of Soldiers)	Agnostic (1)		
	Buddhist (11)		
	Islam (1)		
	Jewish (4)		
	Native American (1)		
	Unknown/Unclassified (27)		
	Wicca (4)		

Areas of Concern

- Suicide
- Isolation
- Domestic violence
- Substance abuse
- Sexual harassment and assault
- Inappropriate risk taking behaviors
- Inappropriate adrenaline seeking behaviors
 - Post-Traumatic Stress
 - Unhealthy levels of stress
 - Relationship struggles
 - Anger management
 - Financial management

Military Service Organizations

Air Force Association

Air Force Sergeants Association

American Ex-Prisoners of War

American G.I. Forum

American Legion

American Veterans

American Veterans Committee

American Veterans for Equal Rights

Army and Navy Union of the United States of America

Association of the United States Army

Blinded Veterans Association

Catholic War Veterans

Concerned Veterans for America

Disabled American Veterans

Fleet Reserve Association

Grand Army of the Republic

Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America

Iraq War Veterans Organization

Jewish War Veterans of the USA

Marine Corps League

Marine Corps Reserve Association

Military Officers Association of America

Military Order of the Carabao

Military Order of the Cootie

Military Order of Foreign Wars

Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States

Military Order of the Purple Heart

Motorcycle Relief Project

Navy League of the United States

National Association for Black Veterans

National Guard Association of the United States

Navy Musicians Association

Paralyzed Veterans of America

Pearl Harbor Survivors Association

Retired Enlisted Association

Society of American Military Engineers

Society of the Cincinnati

Student Veterans of America

United Confederate Veterans

United Spanish War Veterans

United States Submarine Veterans

United States Submarine Veterans of World War II

Veterans' Alliance for Security and Democracy

Veterans for life

Veterans United For a Better Life

Veterans for Peace

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Vietnamese American Armed Forces Association

Vietnam Veterans of America

Warrior Pointe

Wounded Warrior Project

Wounded Warrior Anglers

Alaska
National
Guard

**Partners
in
Care**



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE PARTNERS IN CARE
CONGREGATION
AND
THE ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD

SUBJECT: Alaska National Guard Partners In Care Program

1. The Partners in Care through their respective congregations and the Alaska National Guard recognize a need for a coordinated effort to provide faith based support to all members of Alaska's military. The Partners in Care is a voluntary relationship between faith communities and the AKNG. The purpose of this agreement is to provide faith-based support to all members of the military and their families upon request. The AKNG and the Partners in Care realize that this initiative in no way endorses the establishment or requirement to participate in any religion.

2. The understanding between the parties is as follows:

a. The FBO (faith based organization) agrees that support will be afforded to all military members and their families equally and without discrimination or regard to their religious beliefs.

b. All religious and faith-based communities are welcome to participate in this initiative provided they consent to this agreement.

c. Partners in Care FBOs and the AKNG shall designate points of contact and a list of

supportive services available for service members and their families.

d. The services provided to military members and their families shall be free of charge and at no obligation to the participants and neither party assumes any liability on behalf of the other.

e. Partners in Care congregations will provide an agent of their respective FBO to act as a signatory to this agreement.

f. The AKNG shall provide training seminars related to the initiative.

3. Both parties agree to provide support to the extent that resources are available.

4. The managerial support and point of contact for the Partners in Care on behalf of the Adjutant General will be the JFHQ Chaplain and the Chaplain staff.

5. The Agreement shall be in effect until revoked or amended. Any amendment must be agreed to by both parties and in writing. This MOU may be revoked by either party

SUBJECT: Alaska National Guard Partners in Care Program after providing written notification to the other at least 30 days prior to the revocation effective date. Only the agents of the Religious organization and the Alaska National Guard can notify as to an amendment or revocation of this document. Electronic mail is an acceptable form of amendment for revocation purposes, but the message must be acknowledged and confirmed.

Partners in Care

Thank you for your support of Alaska’s military and their families! They are your neighbors and friends – fellow citizens in time of peace and service members who mobilize in time of disaster, community need, or war. Your support and service to them conveys a great gift of recognition and honor.

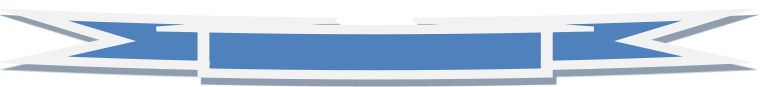
The “Partners in Care” program reflects the desire to link caring communities in support of these warriors and their families who face unique challenges because of their service. Alaska’s shared strength and resources make us all stronger.

Please consider accepting this worthwhile project and working with the Alaska’s military Chaplain teams as “Partners in Care.”

PARTNERS IN CARE

All Faith Communities are welcome to participate as “Partners in Care” (PIC) organizations. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by an Alaska National Guard (AKNG) Chaplain and a representative of the participating faith based organization (FBO) formalizes the relationship. The MOU defines the purpose, scope and nature of the partnership. Support is offered by the participating FBO to all referred service members and families within the limits of the FBO resources and abilities and free of charge without regard to the recipients’ religious affiliation.

It is recognized and understood that military service members and their families are integral parts of local communities across the state. These service members and their families endure the stress incumbent upon those who sacrifice in the defense of liberty and the safety and security of both State and Nation. It is further recognized and understood that within the communities are FBOs uniquely equipped and able to provide faith-based support to Alaska military members and families in times of crisis, stress and need. To that end “Partners in Care” invites you to join in this shared ministry initiative.



Examples of Services Offered

Note: This is not exhaustive and varies from FBO to FBO; we ask that you share your organizations strengths!

- Counseling for Individuals, Couples, Marriages and Families
- Child Care – Sick Child Support
- Basic Household and Automotive Repairs
- Child and Teen Education and Mentoring
- Reunion/Reintegration Support
- Single Parent Deployment Support
- Women’s, Men’s and Children’s Support Groups and Activities
- Emergency Food, clothing and Housing
- Transportation Assistance
- Financial Management Classes
- Crisis and Grief Counseling
- A place where military members and their families can volunteer!

Alaska National Guard Chaplain Staff

Chaplain (Colonel) Rick Koch
(907) 428-6904
richard.j.koch14.mil@mail.mil

Chaplain (Lieutenant Colonel) Ted McGovern
(907) 428-6547
theodore.j.mcgovern.mil@mail.mil

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – A newly-formed partnership between the Alaska National Guard and faith-based organizations is benefiting Alaska National Guardsmen who are in need of support.

Partners in Care is a program that links faith-based organizations that provide specific services with the more than 4,000 Guardsmen and their families to address the unique challenges service in the Guard presents.

“We are building a network of support,” said Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Ted McGovern, Alaska Army National Guard. “Instead of all these different agencies working independently to support service members, we are trying to synchronize the support.”

McGovern referred to the support network as a web that will hopefully catch more of the service members who fall through the cracks and do not receive help.

From grief and marital issues to financial hardships and parenting struggles, PIC facilitates an efficient referral opportunity for chaplains to help Guardsmen receive assistance. Guard members can go through their unit chaplain for support.

“The need is great and the hurt is great,” explained McGovern. “There are a lot of people who struggle with life’s challenges and we want to do everything we can to reach and help them.”

In the last seven months, chaplains have been contacted by more than 1,000 Alaska Guard members. This has generated over 100 counseling sessions.

Five faith-based organizations have signed an agreement of partnership with the AKNG since its inception in October 2014; Eagle River Grace Church, Eagle River Presbyterian Church, Faith Christian Community, Grace and Truth Christian Church and the Conflict Resolution Center.

To further assist efforts, PIC has linked up with the Alaska Forget-Me-Not Coalition for Service Members, Veterans and Families. The coalition’s focus is on statewide collaboration, community outreach, identifying gaps in services, minimizing duplication and maximizing use of existing funding.

Some of the services that PIC can refer Guardsmen to include addiction recovery, mediation, youth and adult fellowship groups, pastoral care and counseling, grief support and conflict.

“We are really looking forward to the possibilities this program has to offer in terms of creating a mutual appreciation and growing understanding between Alaskan communities and the military members serving here,” said State Command Chaplain (Col.) Richard Koch.

What questions or comments do you have concerning military families and military culture?

Thank you and take care!